

Eternity Daily Bible Study - No. 368
Series: The Primal Church - Acts Chapters 1-8
Verses: Acts 5:12-16
Topic: Power Unleashed
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[Note: Eternity-DBS is back from the Thanksgiving break and will resume as normal, I hope you had a wonderful few days.]

Acts 5:12-16 MKJV And many miracles and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles; and they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch. (13) And of the rest no one dared to join himself to them, but the people magnified them; (14) and more believing ones were added to the Lord, multitudes both of men and women; (15) So as to carry out the sick into the streets and place them on cots and mattresses, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them. (16) And also a multitude came from the cities around Jerusalem, bringing sick ones, and those being tormented by unclean spirits, who were all healed.

The prayer at the end of Acts 4 is answered with mighty miracles. It is a glorious season of healing and of proclamation of the gospel – but as we will see tomorrow the Sanhedrin soon opposes it.

“and they were all with one accord in Solomon's Porch.” Again, as at Pentecost, the mighty season of miracles is preceded by Christians being united, in prayer and worship, in one geographical location – in this case – Solomon's Portico.

[Note on Solomon's Porch / Portico: A “portico” is an ambulatory, consisting of a roof supported by columns placed at regular intervals - a roofed colonnade. The portico bearing Solomon's name was that running along the eastern wall in the Court of the Gentiles of Herod's temple. It had double columns. It is mentioned in John 10:23, Acts 3:11 and Acts 5:12 and seems to have been a favorite gathering place for Christian teaching.]

“And many miracles and wonders were done among the people by the hands of the apostles” – throughout the New Testament it is mainly the apostolic anointing that causes miracles and powerful healings to occur. We should not be astonished that some have healing gifts and others do not. That the miracles happened through the apostles and not through others is no slur on the non-apostles but is simply the ordering of God.

The flip side of this is that spiritual leaders should possess real spiritual power – not just organizational skills or academic excellence. The Sanhedrin had the political and intellectual skills, but lacked true spiritual power. The apostles led because they knew Jesus and exercised healing and delivering power in His name. What use is a spiritual leader who cannot deliver people from demons?

“And of the rest no one dared to join himself to them, but the people magnified them;” – the apostles were so clearly the leaders that no-one else claimed leadership or apostleship. They were in a class of their own. They were respected and “magnified” and gained the following of the new Christian community.

The problem with many revivals is a swift fracturing of the leadership, or rival claims to leadership of the revival. The post-Pentecost community was “of one accord” and led by Spirit-filled men of God, who were the unchallenged (and unchallengeable) leadership of the movement. This unity and good leadership, which was duly respected, gave rise to a long season of miracles that affected not just Jerusalem but the entire surrounding area.

The power was so great that it led to superstitious behavior – “So as to carry out the sick into the streets and place them on cots and mattresses, so that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.” This sort of thing happens on the mission field when the power of the gospel impacts a pre-Christian culture, which then views that power through its own cultural paradigms. In such innocent cases, much to our chagrin, God sometimes honors the superstition!

However, when the Holy Spirit moves He can do the most unusual things – and we see healing by cloths and even handkerchiefs in Acts 19:12. In the Old Testament a man is raised from the dead when his body accidentally falls on the bones of Elisha! (2 Kings 13:21).

Yet I do not think that we should start a ministry of “shadow healing”! Laying on of hands and anointing with oil with a prayer of faith and a word of command is much more biblical!

The revival had large numbers of converts – which is always a good sign! Both men and women came to the Lord. This is a mature revival – most revivals seem many women coming to the Lord at first, but few men. The men have much more pride to swallow!

There was regional impact – and both healing and deliverance: “And also a multitude came from the cities around Jerusalem, bringing sick ones, and those being tormented by unclean spirits, who were all healed.”

The apostolic anointing was so great and the faith level was so high that they “were all healed.” This phrase (all healed) starts in Ezekiel 47:9 and is the outcome of the river that flows from the Throne of God. We then find it occurring in the ministry of Jesus (Matthew 8:16, Luke 6:19) and finally here with the apostles in Acts. The river of life is a river of healing and when it flows in revival power all are healed.

The flip side is that it answers the question “why isn’t everyone healed?” – with “because the power of God is not yet present in its fullness”. When the river flows, and overflows with abundance, then everyone is healed. But the River of Life is often blocked by division, heresy, greed, unbelief and so forth (as it was at Nazareth Mark 6:5, Matthew 13:58). It is not with the sick that the blame lies – but with us who lead them, who are not in unity, and who lack faith – as the disciples did when

confronted with the child tormented by an evil spirit they could not cast out.
(Matthew 17:17-20) It wasn't the child that Jesus rebuked – but His own followers!

Healing and deliverance are the inheritance of the Church when it is in the Spirit, in unity, submitted to Christ and filled with faith.

Blessings,

John Edmiston

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